

IMPROVED FRAME STRUCTURE FOR VEHICLE TAILGATE

Abstract

A tailgate assembly adapted to be mounted along an open edge of a vehicle's load-carrying bed is provided. The tailgate is able to alternatively pivot about (1) an axis generally parallel with a bottom edge of the tailgate for movement between a closed position and a folded-open position and (2) an axis generally parallel with a lateral edge of the tailgate for movement between the closed position and a swing-open position. The tailgate assembly includes a stamped sheet metal frame having a reinforced cross-sectional shape with an inner side facing an associated vehicle's load-carrying bed and an outer side opposite the inner side. The tailgate assembly further includes a skin attached to the outer side of the frame.